

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 4, and 6 are currently pending in the present application, Claims 1, 3, and 5 having been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer by way of the present amendment. No new matter has been added.

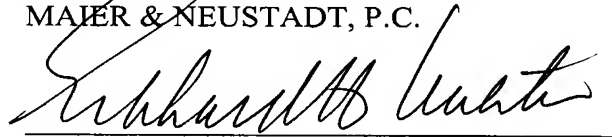
In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1, 3, and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Sekine, et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,370,330, hereinafter "Sekine"); and Claims 2, 4, and 6 were allowed.

As an initial matter, Applicants appreciatively acknowledge the allowance of Claims 2, 4, and 6. In an effort to expedite prosecution of this application, Claims 1, 3, and 5 have been canceled, leaving only allowed claims pending. Accordingly, independent Claims 2, 4, and 6 are respectfully submitted to be allowable.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussions, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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